

32. The peptide of claim 29, wherein the immunologically active amino acid sequence consists of 9-20 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16.

33. A method of detecting the presence or absence of an antibody against hepatitis C virus in a sample liquid, the method comprising the following steps:

(a) incubating said sample liquid which may contain an antibody against hepatitis C virus with a peptide consisting of: (1) an isolated immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16; (2) optionally, an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the immunologically active sequence; and (3) optionally, a solid phase binding group or a marker group coupled to the spacer region; and

(b) detecting any binding between the antibody and the peptide, thereby detecting the presence or absence of the antibody in said sample liquid.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the peptide consists of (1), (2) and (3).

41. The method of claim 40, wherein (3) is a solid phase binding group.

43. The method of claim 39, wherein the immunologically active amino acid sequence consists of 9-20 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16.

44. The method of claim 40, wherein (3) is a marker group.

45. A method of detecting the presence or absence of an antibody against hepatitis C virus in a sample liquid, the method comprising the following steps:
(a) incubating said sample liquid which may contain an antibody against hepatitis C virus with two peptides P1 and P2, wherein the peptide P1 consists of (1) an

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isolated immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16; (2) an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the immunologically active sequence; and (3) a solid phase binding group; and the peptide P2 consists of (1) an isolated immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16; (2) optionally, an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the immunologically active sequence; and (3) a marker group coupled to the spacer region; and

(b) detecting any binding between the antibody and both of the peptides P1 and P2, thereby detecting the presence or absence of the antibody in said sample liquid.

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47. The method of claim 45, wherein in each of the peptides P1 and P2 the immunologically active amino acid sequence consists of 9-20 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 12-16.

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48. A method of detecting the presence or absence of an antibody against hepatitis C virus in a sample, the method comprising the following steps:

(a) incubating a first aliquot of the sample liquid with at least one first immobilized antigen which is specific for a first group of antibodies to be typed, to react the first group antibodies with the at least one first immobilized antigen, wherein the at least one first immobilized antigen consists of: (1) a first isolated immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 11-16; (2) an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the first immunologically active sequence; and (3) a solid phase binding group coupled to the spacer region, and the first group of antibodies is present in an amount which does not exceed the capacity of the at least one first immobilized antigen;

(b) thereafter, separating the first aliquot from step (a) from the at least one first immobilized antigen, and incubating the first aliquot with at least one second immobilized antigen which is specific for a second group of antibodies to be typed, to react the second group of antibodies with the at least one second immobilized antigen, wherein the at least one second immobilized antigen consists of: (1) a second isolated

immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 11-16, wherein the second immunologically active sequence is different than the first immunologically active sequence; (2) an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the second immunologically active sequence; and (3) a solid phase binding group coupled to the spacer region;

(c) optionally repeating step (b) with at least one further antigen or antigens, each of which is specific for at least one further group of antibodies to be typed, wherein each of the at least one further antigen or antigens consists of: (1) a further isolated immunologically active amino acid sequence from the hepatitis C virus consisting of 6-22 amino acids from one of SEQ ID NOs: 11-16, wherein the further immunologically active sequence is different than the first immunologically active sequence and the second immunologically active sequence; (2) an immunologically inactive spacer region coupled to the second immunologically active sequence; and (3) a solid phase binding group coupled to the spacer region, and in each repeated step (b) the at least one further antigen or antigens are incubated separately from the antigen or antigens in a previous step (b);

(d) optionally repeating steps (a) through (c) with a second aliquot of the sample liquid, wherein the sequence of antigens is different than for steps (a) through (c) conducted with the first aliquot;

(e) qualitatively or quantitatively determining the immunological activity of the respective immobilized antigens with the respective groups of antibodies in the sample to be typed; and

(f) typing the antibodies in the sample based on the determining step (e).

REMARKS

Claims 29-49 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Claims 29, 32, 39-41, 43-45, 47 and 48 have been amended without prejudice to conform with the requirements of the First Office Action.